

SUNlite

Shedding some light on UFOlogy and UFOs

....If we can not identify a light, that doesn't make it a spaceship

Carl Sagan - Cosmos

Volume 5 Number 5

September-October 2013



Front: The satellite's USA 238 a and deb (NOSS 3-6) flare briefly to about first magnitude as they pass through the constellation Andromeda.

Left: A mosaic of all the meteors I recorded in a series of photographs taken of the constellation Perseus on the night of meteor maximum. These meteors were fairly short in duration and not so bright. However, there were several that were not in this field of view that arced across the sky and would have been easily seen by casual observers. They might even have been reported as UFOs.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who's blogging UFOs.....	2-3
The Roswell Corner	4
Crashology's last stand.....	5-15
String theory III.....	16
701 club: Case #2045 September 6, 1952.....	17-18
UFO evidence under review: September 21, 1961.....	19-23
Virgie, Kentucky UFO identified?.....	23
UFOs on the tube.....	24
Buy it, borrow it or bin it.....	24

Relaxing under the stars

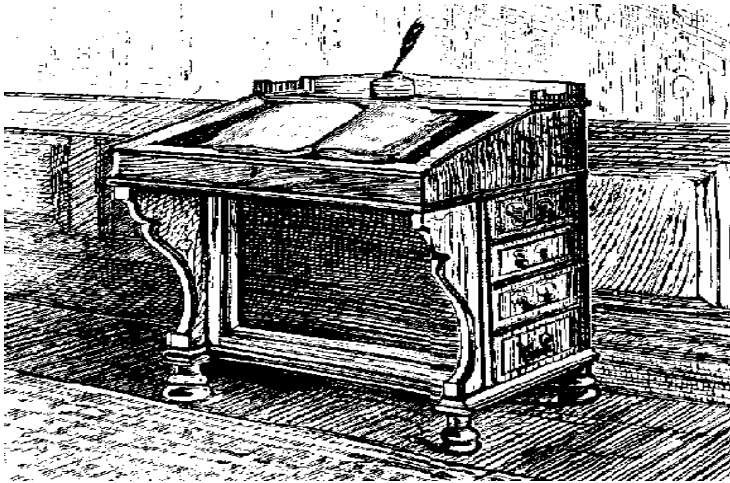
August is always a fun month for me as an amateur astronomer. Nothing is more fun than putting away my telescope to stare at the sky and enjoy the annual Perseid meteor shower. As I watched the spectacle, I began to wonder about all the meteor observing hours I have logged over the years. They must number in the thousands by now. Despite all this time watching the sky, without any distractions, I have yet to see anything I could not identify. Over the period of the maximum, hundreds of amateur astronomers all over the world were watching the sky without any optical aid other than their eyes. Despite all these experts watching the night sky, I did not see any qualified amateur astronomers actually reporting that they saw a "true" UFO. Some saw unidentified satellites but that is not what UFOlogists would consider a "true" UFO. From what I have read, they consider a "true" UFO to be an actual craft of unknown design/origin.

Another item that caught my eye during the shower were the vast number of satellites that were visible. Since they are not much of an interest to me, I usually ignore them because many of them are faint and not very interesting. My cameras caught dozens of these objects as they crisscrossed the sky. In one instance, I saw two satellites side-by-side. They were a pair of spy satellites called USA 238 and USA 238 deb (deb=debris). The debris designation may be misleading as some observers have reported seeing it maneuver. They flared to about first magnitude at one point (see cover image), which was odd because first one flared and then the second flared into brightness just a few seconds later. Sky watchers should take the time to familiarize themselves with such interesting man-made objects.

Kevin Randle's recent missives inspired me to, once again, address the arguments he has regarding the project MOGUL explanation for Roswell. This seems to be the dream team's only hope of trying to prove they are right. They can't produce any evidence of their own so they choose to find ways to make the MOGUL explanation appear impossible. I think it is important to point out that over the past twenty plus years of Randle's work on the topic, I have rarely seen any of his major claims about the case be proven to be right. On the other hand, some of his claims in the books he has authored/coauthored have been proven to be wrong. So strong were his convictions about Frank Kaufmann, that Randle wrote a ten-page rebuttal to all the skeptic's arguments against him in Conspiracy of Silence. The argument ended with Mr. Randle declaring that the record showed that Kaufmann was telling the truth. Randle would later have to admit he was wrong and reveal that Kaufmann had lied to him many times. Now he is just as certain about MOGUL. With his previous track record, can we really consider his OPINION the final word? I make my case against his arguments on page 5.

Who's blogging UFOs?

Hot topics and varied opinions



Chinese lanterns are becoming a thorn in UFOlogy's side. UFOlogists are perplexed by them because they produce so many UFO reports. Despite everyone being aware of how they can appear, we still see such UFO reports being promoted on various web sites. Peter Davenport seems to believe that these "orange fireball" reports are something significant. Several of the "orange fireball" cases he lists on his NUFORC home page appear to be Chinese lanterns.

Timothy Good argues that UFOs pose a threat! Like Nick Pope, he used the latest release of reports as a chance to recite the same nonsense over and over again. He reported that Air Marshall Sir Peter Horsley had a two hour interview with an alien in 1954! Of course, that is just one of those stories that lack any proof. Many of Good's stories are just like this making him appear to be a very gullible individual.

Robert Sheaffer commented on Nick Pope's claims about

the MOD desk. There were quite a few comments about Mr. Pope from British skeptics/UFOlogists. Everyone was quick to point out that Mr. Pope wants all UFO files to become available to the public. However, he hypocritically refuses to allow any files that mention his work at the MOD to be released. Apparently, Mr. Pope realizes that if these files saw the light of day, people would know that he was not quite the UFO investigator he claims to be.

IPACO has revealed that they have detected the missing thread in the McMinnville photographs! However, it is not that obvious to the observer. Their software modification for string detection attempts to increase the signal to noise in specific areas identified by the user. The previous report has been modified to add the new section (starting on page 29). There seems to be indications that a thread DOES exist. However, will UFOlogists (especially those promoting the annual festival regarding the photographs) accept this conclusion? Can we now consider this one finally debunked? The silence indicates that some might be privately questioning one of UFOlogy's greatest pieces of evidence.

According to some Russians, UFOs love the ocean and naval records demonstrate this. However, there are no records presented and Navy officials deny the stories exist as claimed. I find any stories about USOs highly dubious at best. I spent over twenty years in submarines. Two of my tours (a total of eight years), were on fast attack submarines, where we were undertook many classified operations. I can state that I never heard of any sonar technician or officer mention one USO encounter. If one had occurred on my vessel (or any vessel that my fellow sailors were aboard), I would have heard of it. Despite the claims about submariners being very secretive, they rarely were so in discussing things on board a submarine. I heard my share of sea stories that were classified in the CPO quarters while underway. Not one involved a submarine tracking an "unidentified:" object that acted the way described by UFO proponents. As usual, I am extremely skeptical of such stories.

MUFON's Roger Marsh has declared that two UFO sightings are now "case closed". I assumed that meant the cases would be solved conclusively. Apparently, MUFON, or Marsh, declare a case closed the instant their investigators can't solve it. In other words, using the words "case closed" secretly means "we have a potential alien spaceship sighting". As most of SUNlite's readers know, it sometimes takes many years and some effort to solve a case. Closing the case file is more like.... "I give up because I can't/ do not want to solve it" or "I want this to be an unknown (AKA alien spaceship) so I am going to find reasons to reject any explanation". In either case, there are several reasons why the case may remain "unknown". The investigators may not have been thorough enough or the witness may have not been very accurate in their descriptions of what transpired. It is also possible the investigator was biased towards wanting the case to remain "unknown". MUFON should not be trumpeting that their investigators can't solve these cases. They should be cheering when their investigators solve cases. Strangely, they seem ashamed to announce it when this occurs.

Billy Cox seems to think the US government needs to get back into the UFO business again. My question is, "What would be the purpose and objective of such a study/organization"? Are we supposed to create an organization to study Bigfoot as well? It all comes down to evidence. A government organization would probably be staffed by the same UFO scientists and proponents that have been in the UFO mix for the past few decades. Their track record has been dubious in investigating cases over the past sixty years and their research has produced nothing of significance. If Congress would not fund SETI, why would they fund a governmental version of MUFON?

Marjorie Fish quietly passed away in April with little fanfare. Steve Pearse announced this an e-mail to various individuals. He cited the published obituary, where it stated that Fish had repudiated her own map at some point. Kathleen Marden responded that she was unaware of the repudiation. It seems that the obituary was written by family members. We probably will never know if she said this privately or publicly. Robert Sheaffer and Kitty Mervine have been writing about Betty Hill and the fish map on their blogs

Who's blogging UFOs? (Cont'd)

so I am not going to waste a lot of time repeating their findings. As for Mr. Pearse, he had his own reasons to announce that Fish had renounced his map. For those who might have forgotten, Mr. Pearse has his own map (the Hill-Wilson map), which I discussed in SUNlite 2-6. At that time, Pearse did not want to reveal the true home world of the aliens to me. He has now announced that the star 20 Leo Minoris is this the home star of the grays. Looking at his web site,, I see the same argument presented to me over two years ago. It is not very compelling and is based on a wild story told by an abductee, who talked to an alien. To me it looks like GIGO .

Kitty Mervine wrote an interesting article about how Betty Hill stated that her aliens were not like the grays portrayed in the movie about her abduction. Barbara has been going through Betty Hill's files at the University of New Hampshire and has unearthed some interesting comments by Mrs. Hill. Robert Sheaffer commented about the UFOs Betty saw over the years and the warning she received from UFOlogists about being more skeptical about what she considered an alien spaceship. It seems that Betty Hill saw just about any light in the sky as an alien spaceship.

There is a blog about the Cash-Landrum incident that is worth reading. The author of "Blue blurry lines", Curt Collins, has done a lot of homework on the subject and presents it in a manner that allows the reader to evaluate the evidence. I have always been of the opinion that the entire case hinges on the helicopters. Once the fleet of helicopters were identified, the rest of the story might be resolved. Unfortunately, the source of the fleet of helicopters has never been identified and very few people saw them. That brings into question the story as told. I always wondered about the air crews being exposed to the same harmful emissions that the witnesses were supposedly exposed. It is strange that there is no record of these air crews suffering from radiation sickness.

GEIPAN (France) and CEFAA (Chile) seemed to be interested in sharing UFO data. What this involves is hard to determine. I don't see this resulting in any earth shattering revelations. I also wonder how each group's researchers/scientists/leaders will deal with criticism from the other side. What will CEFAA say if GEIPAN declares their videos of craft are nothing more than videos of bugs?

Jack Brewer wrote another scathing article about UFOlogy. His article about MUFON is very revealing about how the leadership in MUFON is composed of a lot of people more interested in their own little UFO fiefdoms than actual scientific research. While MUFON is one of the world's largest UFO organizations, the desire to sensationalize their symposiums, research, and efforts to date prevents them from impressing anybody outside the UFO community. If UFOlogy desires respect from the scientific community, the first thing they need to do is cleanse themselves of organizations like MUFON. Brewer's biting retort to MUFON's John Ventre in the comments section of his second part of this article, reflect my feelings on the subject completely, *You, members of MUFON and anyone else are entitled to believe anything you choose. You are also entitled to conduct investigations and research as you prefer. You are not entitled, however, to misrepresent it as science without challenge.*

Kevin Randle continues to demonstrate he can be skeptical as long as it does not involve Roswell. His latest expose' of Lt. Colonel French's ridiculous claims just confirms what I wrote in the last issue of SUNlite. Mr. Randle seemed upset that he had to expose French because of his impressive military credentials. Charlatans like French should be exposed no matter what their military records show. My question really is, "How do UFOlogists fall for these stories?" All those UFOlogists and journalists, who openly promoted/encouraged French because of his military record and/or because he confirms their beliefs, should feel ashamed for being so gullible.

MUFON revealed their best ten cases of 2012 at their recent "symposium". One of the included an October 23, 2012 video that was recorded in Georgia. MUFON appears baffled by the video but It looks like a balloon of some kind the way it oscillates and moves around.

From the "say it isn't so" category, we have the case of Indian soldiers thinking they were observing military drones being flown over the border by the Chinese. A couple of Indian Astronomers evaluated the observations and determined they were simply mistaking the planets Jupiter and Venus as potential drones. The soldiers were looking for incursions into their airspace and thought they were seeing it. If they were looking for UFOs, would they have made the same mistake? I think it is very likely.

Norfolk, Virginia had a crashed disc scare in late July. This story describes a balloon and Styrofoam packaging. My guess is that it was some sort of scientific or student balloon experiment. It sure got the attention of the military and police authorities. Better to be concerned than to ignore something that might be an explosive of some kind. Maybe, in a few decades, it will appear in UFO folklore as a crashed disc. The photographs will be considered to be debris strewn around by the military as a diversion and various individuals will appear claiming that they saw the real debris and it was exotic/unearthly. Does that sound familiar?

The great debate between Stanton Friedman and Robert Sheaffer turned out to be a one-sided affair. On talking points, Friedman was the clear loser. He brought nothing new to the discussion and seemed unfamiliar with a lot of points raised by Sheaffer. Every time Sheaffer cornered him, Friedman retreated to his happy place about "rules for debunkers" and "cosmic Watergate", hoping the audience would not notice. He seemed to love reminding everyone that he won a \$1000 bet with Phil Klass about the typeface found in the Cutler-Twining document. Like an old high school football star, way past his prime, Friedman wants to remind everyone about the one insignificant touchdown he scored in some obscure game everyone else has forgotten about. Follow the link and judge for yourself.

The Roswell Corner

Is the "new evidence" really a hoax?

One can not really say without seeing the photographs that, according to Rich Reynolds, may show an alien body. Meanwhile, the same Reynolds states that a major newspaper and a cable network chose not to promote the evidence because the evidence was coming from crash proponents! After all the Roswell programs that get hyped on the cable shows and news media outlets, are we really supposed to believe that because Don Schmitt (or some other Roswell promoter) approached them, they were going to question the evidence? Maybe they did not like the "evidence" for other reasons. Perhaps too much money was being requested or it looked fake! This makes me wonder, which person on the dream team actually believes these photographs are authentic? Kevin Randle, based on his public statements about the dream team, seems to find this evidence not very compelling. If a news paper and cable program has turned their noses up at it, the photographs must be pretty lame evidence. I will reserve final judgement for when, or if, the evidence ever sees the light of day but it sure is beginning to look like a hoax of some kind.

Battelle documented that they had studied the Roswell metals!

At least that is what Rich Reynolds thinks that Anthony Bragalia has proven. The truth of the matter is all of Bragalia's speculation about Nitinol and Roswell are not based on any established facts. Most of what he has written is based on his interpretation of what he thinks these documents mean. I have addressed this many times in SUNlite (1-2, 1-3, 2-5). Mr. Reynolds puts far too much faith in Bragalia's "research" and "integrity". He is blinded by his trust in what Bragalia writes instead of looking at the information critically.

Roswell crash photographs

Anthony Bragalia wrote another one of his Roswell articles, where he makes quite a bit out of nothing much. He apparently talked to quite a few enlisted men attached to the photo unit at Roswell. They stated that they were not allowed or did not photograph any of the debris (balloon or alien spaceship). They also stated others from outside the base were directed to photograph the recovery operations and debris. One witness mentioned was Fred Benthall, who had told his story in "Witness to Roswell". I had commented about Mr. Benthall in my critique of the book on my web site.

A few years ago, I was contacted by a close friend of Fred Benthall, who knew him growing up. This gentleman had some comments and documents that he thought might interest me. When Fred died, his wife allowed him to go through his military records since they were so close. I was given copies of some of those records and they paint a slightly different record than what was described in "Witness to Roswell".

During the war, Benthall was a photographer/B-29 mechanic in the Pacific. He was transferred from Kirtland AFB to Anacostia in June of 1946 as a temporary duty assignment for Operation Crossroads. Benthall was assigned to be part of the Photographic Sciences Laboratory, which developed film taken during the test. He remained attached to Anacostia until June of 1947, when he was transferred to the Armed Forces Special Weapons (AFSW) project, Washington DC at Bolling AFB. There is no mention of any flight to Roswell or a trip to the Arctic/Antarctica. He did not even receive a formal security clearance for his work with the AFSW project until 21 July. The records indicate that he remained in Washington, D.C. from 1947 to 1948:

- He was promoted to "technician third grade" while being stationed at Bolling AFB in September of 1947
- In March of 1948, he received an award for being an "administrative leader" from the Academy of model aeronautics in Washington, D.C.. My source stated that Benthall was an avid model airplane enthusiast.
- His qualification card indicates he was stationed at Bolling AFB in October 1948.

There are no indications of temporary duty assignments elsewhere. It seems unlikely that he could have been in Antarctica or the Arctic for any significant period of time.

My source stated that these were all the records he could access but one note on the qualification card is important in regards to the transfer to the Arctic/Antarctica. It stated that he was not available for overseas assignment.

(28) REMARKS	ENI WAS CREW CHIEF ON B-29 FOR 14 MONTHS	CLASS:	OFFICER	<i>William Benthall</i>
	NOT AVAILABLE FOR O/S ASSIGNMENT WITHOUT RESTRICTION AS TO	SOLDIER		<i>Fredrick W Benthall</i>
LOCALITY PRIOR TO 16 JUN 1950: IN INTERIM, MAY BE ASSD ONLY TO ALASKA,		(31) DRIVES: AUTO ☒ TON TRUCK ☒ MOTORCYCLE ☐		
HAWAII, OR CERRILLO, ARIZ. AUTH. D/F, TAG 111424Y, 94P-R 3203 (24 FEB 48)		HOLDS <i>TECH PERM</i> STATE DRIVER'S PERMIT		

The gentlemen, who sent me the files, told me that he thinks Benthall made most of the story up because he was being pestered by Roswell investigators with phone calls. According to my connection, Fred's wife told him Benthall got very angry every time he received one of these calls and he would slam the phone down in disgust. He also stated that Fred never told him anything about Roswell and they were quite close. One can say he kept this secret from his young friend but my informant indicated that he was pretty close and Fred probably would have told him. This is all anecdotal mind you but the records seem to indicate that Benthall never went to the Arctic/Antarctica. Is the Benthall story told in "Witness to Roswell" accurate? We don't know for sure but the records seem to indicate parts of the story are not true, which supports my source's interpretation that Benthall made this story up so Roswell investigators would finally leave him alone.

Crashology's last stand

When Kevin Randle stated he was forming his dream team and making an effort to uncover new information about the Roswell incident, I thought it might be open to all ideas and present a fresh approach. Recent postings on Randle's blog, [A Different Perspective](#), has revealed that it is not an uncontaminated look but pretty much the same stale arguments. Since the team apparently can't find any real evidence for their crashed alien vehicle, they have taken the path of trying to falsify the rival MOGUL hypothesis. In order to do this, they have basically dressed up their old arguments to make them more appealing to those individuals, who are not convinced that the Roswell event was caused by a crashed alien spacecraft. As a result, I decided to demonstrate how all of their arguments have alternate explanations that are reasonable and do not require vast conspiracies or alien spaceships.

A cluster of balloons, a sonobuoy, and absolutely, positively nothing else

It seems that Crary's journal entry describing the balloon flight that was launched on June 4th, 1947 has become a point of focus for Kevin Randle's negative publicity campaign towards the project MOGUL explanation. Randle has been repeating this argument for over a decade. In his 1997 book, [Conspiracy of Silence](#), he wrote the following:

It is reasonable to believe, then, that the June 4 flight was nothing more than a cluster of balloons with a sonobuoy and no long array train. Crary noted that a "whole assembly" was flown on June 5, but mentioned only the sonobuoy of June 4. If there was no assembly, then there were no rawin targets to scatter the metallic debris. Had there been the whole assembly, it seems reasonable to conclude that Crary would have mentioned it, if only because it would have been the first flight of the whole assembly after the researchers arrived in New Mexico.¹

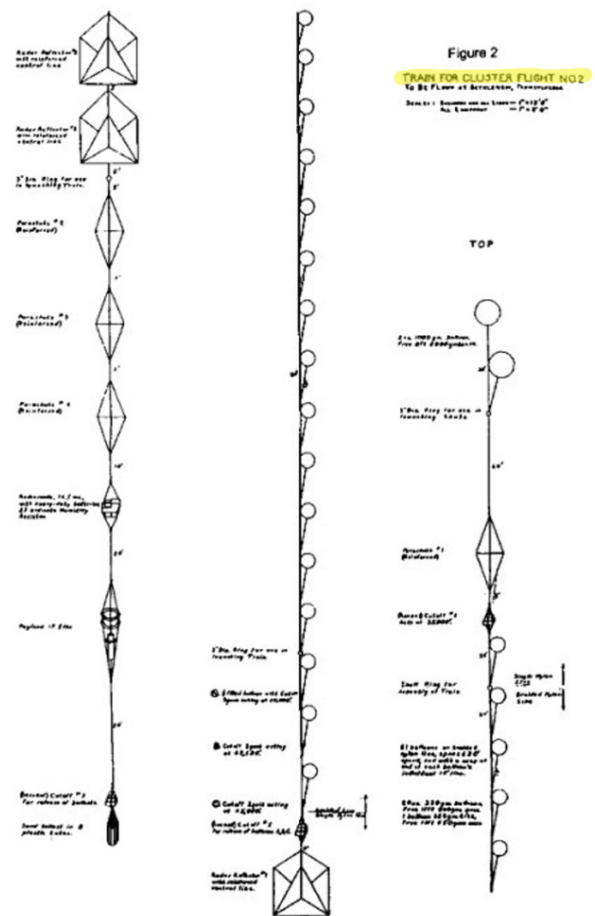
Back in 1997, he considered it "reasonable to believe". Since then, he has changed this to the point that he considers it a proven fact:

The second notation for June 4, the date of the cancelled Flight No. 4, was that they had flown a cluster of balloons, with a sonobuoy in the afternoon. Crary only told us that they had good reception on the ground for the radio signal but not so good on the B-17 that was also used in their attempts to detect a signal. But he did tell us what that flight was and it did not have the rawin targets. It was just a cluster of balloons and a sonobuoy... The field notes and diary make it clear and I do not understand why that clarity is being obscured nor do I understand why there are those who refuse to understand it... Mogul is a distraction that does not work. Each time someone proposes it, we should tell them the flight was cancelled and demand they provide evidence that it wasn't. We should tell them that a cluster of balloons is not a Mogul flight and that the debris found on the Foster ranch was simply too wide spread to be that from Mogul let alone a cluster of balloons with a sonobuoy.²

I had addressed the issue of Crary's journal entry long ago on my Roswell myths page:

Crary's journal was not an official record and he was not even present at the launch of the balloon cluster (he was out on the range at the time). Several of his entries concerning these flights are vague and never list all the materials found in a flight so his journal can not be considered an accurate representation of what was actually flown on the dates in question. His entry stated they flew a "cluster of balloons", which is the common terminology used for one of the NYU flights. The technical reports talk about grouping balloons in clusters. Additionally, if one looks at the drawing for flight #2, it's title reads "Train for cluster flight No. 2". ML-307 radar targets were used on flight #2 and it appears they were probably used on subsequent flights but not flight #5. According to Professor Moore, the inability to track the balloon train with radar was the major reason that the targets were removed for flight #5. It seems reasonable to assume that flight #4 could have had RAWIN targets attached just like flight #2.³

I suspect that Mr. Randle is familiar with this argument although he chooses not to address it. Instead, he apparently made a rather obscure reference to my argument in another blog entry:



In fact, one skeptic denigrated the 50 year old diary. Let's ignore the written word from the time if it does not conform to our world view.⁴

It appears that I might be the skeptic, who shall not be named, since I am unaware of any other skeptic publicly commenting about the journal. Note that Mr. Randle does not identify how I “denigrated” the diary. I was attempting to point out some facts that were not mentioned or ignored by him. In no way was I unfairly criticizing or defaming the journal. Maybe Kevin Randle has a different definition or maybe he feels it necessary to label the argument with such a word in order to paint the argument in a negative light for those, who have not read it.

A frequently used description

The New York University (NYU) records often refer to these flights as “cluster flights”. In the progress report covering the time period of June 1947, we read the following (my emphasis in bold):

*Field tests were conducted at Alamogordo Army Air Base during the week of June 1, using **clusters of meteorological balloon**. The primary object of these tests was to perfect handling and launching techniques for large flights and to check the operation of the various altitude controlling devices developed for this project. At the same time, the tests afforded the opportunity to carry aloft payloads of Watson Laboratories equipment. In general, while the flights were successful in the sense of carrying Watson Laboratory gear aloft for an extended period of time, difficulties and material failures encountered served to emphasize the unsatisfactory characteristics of **meteorological balloon clusters**.*⁵

Twice, the term “cluster” was used to describe the flights in early June. There are other instances of the NYU records using this same phrase to describe the early balloon flights. This indicates that any description of a flight as a “cluster of balloons” could have been a complete flight array or something similar to one. Simply describing a flight as a “cluster of balloons” does not mean that the flight was not a full flight.

Crary's journal vs. the known record

Randle's argument about how the flight was described and what it contained is based on only two entries in Crary's journal. He ignores the rest of the journal in order to create a highly selective interpretation of the entry on June 4th. The truth of the matter is that the journal mentions the word “cluster” to describe three other flights. Two of these were complete flights.

The section from Crary's journal found in the 1994 USAF Roswell report describes eight balloon operations by the NYU team while they were operating from Alamogordo. I decided to create a table, which contains the flight number, how Crary described them, and how the NYU records recorded them:

Flight	Crary's description ⁶	Actual configuration ⁷
4 June 1947	<i>No balloon flights again on account of clouds. Flew regular sono buoy up in cluster of balloons.</i>	unknown
5	<i>Whole assembly of constant altitude balloons set up at 0500</i>	28 Balloons, radiosonde, parachutes, microphone, ballast, dribbler.
6	<i>Balloon flight off about 0530. Dribbler? Broken on takeoff.</i>	28 Balloons, radiosonde, parachutes, microphone, ballast, dribbler.
7	<i>Included cluster of Met balloons</i>	13 meteorological balloons with lifter assembly (operated by barometric switch), microphone, radiosonde, dribbler.
8	<i>On Thursday morning 3 July, a cluster of GM plastic balloons sent up for V2 recording.</i>	10 GM balloons, microphone, radiosonde, dribbler
9	<i>Sent up cluster of balloons with dummy load.</i>	Meteorological balloons released after scrubbed V-2 launch.
10	<i>Flight 10 with single plastic followed from Alamogordo to Cloudcroft</i>	Plastic balloon with clock and blowout patch, microphone, radiosonde, dribbler
11A	<i>Big plastic with small auxiliary plastics. WL gear - radiosonde, dribbler.</i>	Large Smith balloon with barometric switch and blowout patch, 6 plastic balloons, two under inflated metro (meteorological?) balloons, microphone, radiosonde, dribbler

Note that flights 7 and 8 were essentially described as a “cluster of balloons”, just like the flight on June 4th. As one can see from the

actual configuration, there was much more to those flights than a simple “cluster of balloons”. So when Randle stated, “*We should tell them that a cluster of balloons is not a Mogul flight.*”⁸, he is wrong because flights 7 and 8 were described as such by Crary. Either he did not read the entire journal and NYU reports or he is being duplicitous by not mentioning how the term “cluster of balloons” was used to describe other NYU flights.

I think it is also important to note that the June 4th entry by Crary does not state that the flight included “only” a sono buoy and cluster of balloons as Randle wants everyone to believe. His entry does not prove the absence or presence of radar reflectors or any other items that might have been attached. We don’t even know if Crary was actually present when the balloons were launched to see the actual configuration. He may have been too far away on the range getting ready to set off his charges. If this was the case, he would have only known they had used a balloon cluster and a microphone but would have had no idea if any other items were attached. Therefore, one can not positively conclude anything about this “cluster of balloons” from this entry. It falsifies nothing but it does indicate some sort of balloon configuration was launched on that date.

I think it’s clearing up

Much has been made about the weather and what Crary had stated in his journal. Professor Moore’s book on the subject gave his interpretation of what he think occurred. He believes the team was going to launch a balloon sometime around 0000 on June 4th because this was when Crary had gone out to set off charges. He had reason to suspect this might be the case because two days before, Crary mentioned in his journal that he was going to change his plans for shooting charges to coordinate with balloon flights. Unfortunately, clouds prevented them from launching the flight. Moore suggests that the weather cleared around 3:00 AM based on observations from other stations to the west and south of the launch site since Alamogordo did not record any observations until after dawn. It has been the crashologists argument that conditions did not clear enough until much later.

It is unfortunate that there are no weather observations for Alamogordo prior to 0700. Weather Underground does give a 0500 reading of “clear” but this reading appears to be an error as the same entry appears in all of the days surrounding the fourth of June⁹. The National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) retained the observations from some of the stations in New Mexico on June 4th¹⁰:

Time (MST)	Columbus	Engle	Alamogordo	Roswell
0100	Broken	Broken	No data	Scattered
0200	Scattered	Broken	No data	Broken
0300	Clear	Scattered	No data	Scattered
0400	Clear	Scattered	No data	Scattered
0500	Clear	Broken	No data	Scattered
0600	Scattered	Broken	No data	Scattered
0700	Scattered	Broken	Scattered	Scattered
0800	Clear	Broken	Scattered	Scattered

Scattered is defined as 1/8 to 4/8 sky coverage. Broken is defined as 5/8 to 7/8 sky coverage. Times are MST. The NCDC records are recorded in GMT/UTC (+7 hours)

Trying to figure out what transpired at Alamogordo after midnight is hard to say. Professor Moore stated that El Paso (NCDC does not have these observations) cleared after 0230. While these stations are indicative of what might have happened at Alamogordo, one must remember that these stations were separated from Alamogordo by the San Andres and Sacramento mountain ranges, which could influence the weather pattern. All we know is that, at some point before 0700, there were cloudy conditions and that the sky had changed to “scattered” conditions by 0700. Based on this information, one has to consider it possible that the cloudy conditions that had prevented the flight could have occurred around midnight and may have cleared sufficiently by 0300 or 0400 as Moore suggested.

This brings us to the argument that the conditions had to be clear skies to launch balloon. The New York subcommittee on air space dictated that sky conditions be clear for operations in the northeast. The NYU had protested these restrictions and desired permission to launch their balloons as long as there was only thin layers of scattered clouds up to 20,000 feet. They lost this battle and, as a result, were very restricted when they could launch balloons. It seems possible that these rules may have changed when the team moved to New Mexico because of the air traffic was less congested than the northeastern United States. The 21 August 1947 meeting of the Fort Worth Subcommittee on air space implied that there were very few restrictions initially placed on the NYU team:

It was first thought that balloons would ascend and descend within the confines of the White Sands presently assigned danger area and that no further authorization would be required; however the Subcommittee was advised by the University that balloons have been descending outside of the area in the vicinity of Roswell, New Mexico. It, therefore, appeared that there was a certain amount of hazard to aircraft encountered in the descent of this equipment.¹¹



This photograph of the balloons from flight No. 9 demonstrates that the NYU team did not consider some clouds, which are visible in this image, a serious concern when launching their balloon flights. While this flight was “canceled”, the “cluster of balloons” was still released under conditions that violated the rules set by the CAA in the spring of 1947 for balloon flights in the northeast region (they wanted cloudless skies and the rules applied to all balloon releases). This evidence indicates that the rules were not being followed or that they had changed for balloon flights in New Mexico. (Photograph from the 1994 USAF report)

The highlighted statements indicate that the Fort Worth subcommittee had allowed the NYU team to dictate the conditions required for launching balloons. The NYU group had no experience in launching balloons in New Mexico and probably did not realize that their balloons would leave the White Sands area. If they had dictated their own conditions, they probably would have been willing to launch balloons under partly cloudy conditions, which could have occurred before dawn on the fourth.

In order to see if the team did launch balloons under such conditions, I compared the launching of the flights in July with the NCDC surface observations from Alamogordo and other stations. Three flights appear to have been made under conditions that were not clear (Alamogordo had no weather observations for the fourth of July weekend so flight #10 could not be evaluated). Flight #8 was launched very early on the morning of the 3rd (0303 MST). The observations at 0700 listed the conditions as “scattered clouds”. To follow up with that, flight #9 had been planned that evening for a V-2 launch. Conditions at 1600 were also “scattered” (they were “scattered” all day) but that is not what canceled the flight. It was the cancellation of the V-2 launch that prevented this assembly of balloons from being used as a regular flight. Despite these less than desirable conditions, they still launched the balloons with no apparent regard for clouds (see photograph to the left)! Finally, flight #11 was launched at dawn on the 7th. The 0700 observations were “scattered clouds”.

The sky conditions for the various New Mexico stations around the launch time for flights 8 and 11 are¹²:

Date and Time (MST)	Columbus	Engle	Alamogordo	Roswell
July 2 2200	Clear	Scattered	No data (1600 - scattered)	Clear
July 2 2200	Clear	Scattered	No data	Clear
July 2 2300	Scattered	Scattered	No data	Clear
July 3 0000	Scattered	Scattered	No data	Clear
July 3 0100	Broken	Clear	No data	Clear
July 3 0200	Broken	Scattered	No data	Clear
July 3 0300 (Flight 8 launch)	Broken	Scattered	No data	Clear
July 3 0400	Broken	Scattered	No data	Clear
July 3 0500	Broken	Scattered	No data	Clear
July 3 0600	Scattered	Scattered	No data	Clear
July 3 0700	Scattered	Scattered	Scattered	Scattered
July 7 0000	Overcast	Broken	No data	No data
July 7 0100	Broken	Scattered	No data	No data
July 7 0200	Broken	Scattered	No data	No data
July 7 0300	Broken	Scattered	No data	No data
July 7 0400	Broken	Scattered	No data	No data
July 7 0500 (Flight 11 launch)	Scattered	Scattered	No data	Scattered
July 7 0600	Scattered	Broken	No data	Clear
July 7 0700	Scattered	Broken	Scattered	Clear
July 7 0800	Scattered	Broken	Scattered	Clear
July 7 0900	Broken	Broken	Scattered	Clear

It is hard to say exactly how these weather observations relate to the actual weather in Alamogordo at the time the balloon flights were released but it appears to indicate the weather conditions were less than the perfectly clear skies crashologists claim were necessary. Since the weather was consistent over each location, one might infer that the 0700 observations reflected what the weather was in the area at the time of launching. If this is correct, then it demonstrates that the team did launch their balloons if they felt the clouds would not interfere with operations and tracking. These are the kinds of conditions they argued for in their 17 April 1947 letter to the NY subcommittee and brings into question the claim that, while in New Mexico, they only launched their balloon flights under absolutely clear sky conditions.

Always darkest before the dawn

Another item argued by Randle was that the NYU team had no permission to launch balloons at night. I agree that this would never have been allowed in the northeast as it seems to have been understood that the balloons would be launched during the day. As noted previously, when the team arrived in New Mexico there seemed to have been no (or very few) restrictions given to the NYU team about their flight operations. It appears possible that night launches were originally planned in early June based on Crary's journal entries:

- Crary implies they had originally planned a night launch for the first flight in New Mexico. The June 3rd entry states he got up at 0230 but the flight did not occur because of clouds (NCDC data says it was "Broken" until 9AM MST). On June 5th, he wrote that he got up at 4AM for the balloon flight, which was at 5AM. If this is any indication of his preflight routine, it infers a launch was planned on June 3rd for around 3:30 or 4AM.
- On the fourth of June, Crary was out at midnight to set off charges. As mentioned previously, this suggests that a flight could have been planned for sometime around midnight. The next line of the June 4th entry states there was no flight because of clouds. Since the weather was only scattered clouds by 0700, it seems that the clouds that had cancelled the initial launch plans were the ones that were present in the middle of the night, which points towards the possibility that it had been planned as a night launch.

While this is speculation, one can easily refute Kevin Randle's claim that the NYU team was not allowed to perform night launches until months later by examining the official record. On July 3rd, flight #8 was launched at 0303 MST¹³, which was well before twilight. Interestingly, radar was employed to track the flight. Were they given special permission for this night flight? If so, isn't possible they had similar permission in early June? Flight number eight's launch time means that Randle's "fact" about night launches is not a "fact" at all. It is his interpretation of a document that may not even have been applicable for the NYU group's operations while in New Mexico.

Why they wanted to perform a night launch on June 3rd and 4th may have had a lot to do with how their meteorological balloons reacted to sunlight. One of the reasons that Flight #1 had failed was because balloons had burst. A launch of the balloons well before dawn would have minimized the chance of balloons bursting from sunlight exposure and increased the time the flight was airborne. The launching at night would have resulted in some changes by the NYU team for monitoring the flight. They would not be able to accurately track the flight with a theodolite, which meant they would have to track it some other way. Since Alamogordo had a working SCR-584 radar, it seemed to be the solution to this problem. All they would have to do is add a few ML-307s (like flight #2) and hope that the SCR-584 could do the rest of the work. This plan would have failed as soon as the balloons left the range of the radar or the radar lost contact. Assuming this is what occurred, one could easily suggest that the NYU team learned a valuable lesson from that flight and, on subsequent flights they had switched to dawn launches so they could visually track the balloons and went back to using the radiosonde for altitude data.

I confess that this is guesswork but it is, in my opinion, a valid interpretation of what might have occurred regarding why a night launch was attempted and why the ML-307s were possibly used. We have no records to state this actually happened other than Crary's journal entry that a cluster of balloons had been launched at some point on the fourth of June. However, the argument that they never performed night operations in the summer of 1947 is a false one based on a belief and not a close examination of the records available.

It was canceled stupid!!!

The party line repeated over and over again by the "dream team" is that flight number four was canceled completely and the "cluster of balloons" was some sort of service flight that only contained a microphone and a few balloons. This is repeated as if it were a fact. We do know from Crary's journal entry that there were no flights because of clouds but the next sentence states that a "cluster of balloons" was launched. Professor Charles Moore offers a different interpretation that the balloon flight that was originally planned had been delayed by the weather and was launched once the clouds had cleared enough. It is a case of how you construe the entry. Either interpretation is valid but one can not conclusively state that one is more correct than the other.

The claim that this June fourth flight was canceled but assigned a number should be examined. We do know that flight #3 had a failed "launch" on May 8th. That makes one wonder what was the number of the flight that was "abandoned"/canceled on the 3rd of June? Was it flight 3.5? The lack of a number for that flight implies that if the balloons were never launched, then the flight did not receive a number. As a result, if the morning flight of June 4th was "canceled" and never launched, it would also receive no number and the flight on June 5th would have been identified as flight #4 and not #5. If they were using numbers for every assembled flight (even if they were never flown), then flight #5 would have been identified as flight #6 since June 3rd would have been flight #4 and June 4th would have been flight #5. The logical conclusion seems to indicate that the "cluster of balloons" probably was flight number four contrary to what the crashed space ship proponents want everyone to believe.

The other claim that the flight was canceled the instant clouds interfered has to be examined from the point of view of the NYU team in June 1947. They had spent the past few days preparing a full balloon flight and were ready to launch on the third of June. That flight was not launched because of cloud cover, which lasted well into the morning of the 3rd. Records indicate that sky conditions did not clear enough until 9AM, which was too late for launching balloons. The team probably may have been aware that the cloud cover would not clear until late in the morning or stood by with the flight at the ready until it was too late. In either case, it postponed the flight for 24 hours. Fast forward to the morning of June fourth and the same situation presented itself. The team, which was probably anxious about launching their flight, probably would have done as Moore suggested. Instead of cancelling the flight right away, they simply waited for better conditions. Once those were present, the flight was launched. While this is speculation, it is a potential scenario that has to be considered as a plausible and not dismissed without good evidence.

In order to make their interpretation appear more correct, the Roswell team has responded that the lack of any record indicates the flight was canceled. Charles Moore addressed this in the chapter of the book he coauthored. He stated that if no useful altitude data was obtained during the flight, it was not recorded. Even the earliest recorded flights, that were failures, had some altitude data, which is why they were in the record. According to Professor Moore, the team intended to use radar to track the flight and obtain altitude data instead of using a Radiosonde. This plan probably failed as the balloon flight rapidly left the range of the radar or if the radar was unable to track them. If there were a radiosonde attached there may have been reasons for why it did not provide the necessary data. Perhaps it failed or they had difficulty with the signal/receiver. The NYU reports describe limited radio range, problems with batteries, and other technical issues associated with this equipment. We don't know for sure exactly what transpired but if there was no data, even if the flight performed better than flight #5, it appears that it would not have been recorded in the NYU records.

The mantra that flight #4 was canceled is nothing more than a rallying cry to convince everybody that any other interpretation is wrong. The truth of the matter is that Cary's journal entry records some sort of flight being launched and, since we don't know exactly what was contained on this "cluster of balloons", it remains possible that this was the original flight configuration or a modified version of that flight, which could have contained radar reflectors.

Not enough debris

Randle briefly mentioned this in his diatribe about MOGUL, where he stated there was too much material at the Foster Ranch to be explained by a project MOGUL flight. This argument was started by Robert Galganski long ago where he tried to demonstrate, through mathematical calculations, how a full MOGUL flight could not create the debris field described by the various Roswell authors. As I pointed out long ago, the Galganski exercise is not a valid one because it makes a flawed assumption in order to arrive at his desired conclusion. Randle repeats that assumption. They assume a certain concentration of debris based on what they think the witnesses described.

The idea that one can quantify the concentration of material based on the descriptions given by Marcel and Brazel is something that can not be scientifically done. We have no photographs or maps of the debris field to base the description upon. In both cases, the witnesses referred to the debris field as "scattered". This is the same type of description given by Bessie Brazel and Sheridan Cavitt. How does one quantify such a term? It is not like Marcel/Brazel stated there was debris every two feet. They simply described a bunch of debris spread out over the field. In Brazel's description, this field was only over a few hundred yards. Marcel felt it was a larger area but he was basing this on his memory thirty years later.

As I have demonstrated with a scale model back in SUNlite 4-4, the amount of debris produced by the fragments of three reflectors and the debris from four or more balloons would probably have been adequate to create this 'scattered' description. Just examine the photographs from Fort Worth. According to David Rudiak, that is only one reflector. Take those fragments, multiply it by three, and then spread them out onto a field. In my opinion, one could easily describe that distribution of material as "scattered". The debris field concentration argument made by Randle and company completely ignores the actual descriptions of the debris field by those that were known to be there in favor of the myth that they have created.

Because I said so!

Randle continued his efforts to tell everybody that flight #4 did not exist by producing an argument about Notices to Airmen (NOTAM) not documenting the flight. According to Kevin Randle (my emphasis in bold and underlined):

*There was no Flight No. 4 to drop debris up on the Foster ranch, no Flight No. 4 that would have presented a threat to aerial navigation, **hence no NOTAM filed for the flight***¹⁴

He also made a similar statement back in May of 2013 when answering Lance Moody (my emphasis in bold and underlined):

*Here's something I know for a fact. There was no flight no. 4. **I know this because a NOTAM for the flights were required and there was no NOTAM for flight no. 4.** What does that do to Mogul?*¹⁵

Moody would respond to this comment asking Randle if he had NOTAMs from other flights. Randle never responded to this request. Randle implied by this statement that he had discovered that all other flights had NOTAMs while the June 4th flight did not. However, this is completely in contradiction with what he stated previously on his blog a year before:

*I called, wrote, emailed and communicated with a couple of dozen different agencies most of them within the FAA. I finally learned that no such archive exists. The rules said that the NOTAMs be held for a short period and then destroyed when no longer useful.*¹⁶

This means that any record of a NOTAM would not exist today. However, Randle seemed to be implying that he did have records. By repeating this claim as if it were a fact, he got others into accepting this without evidence. Anthony Mugan seemed more than willing to accept Randle's claim simply because it was stated as if it were a fact:

*I would tend to agree with you. Crary's diary plus the absence of a NOTAM as you say is all very suggestive...*¹⁷

Lance Moody would repeat his request for Randle to, again, present evidence of these NOTAMs. Rather than admitting he did not have such proof, Randle responded that he had drawn his conclusion based on the statements of Charles Moore:

*Charles Moore told Steven Schiff in August 1995 that there was no NOTAM for the June 4 flight because they expected the ascent to remain over restricted territory.*¹⁸

Instead of having confirmation of his claim, Randle was simply giving his biased interpretation that Moore stated that all other flights but number four had NOTAMs. He did not provide the statement by Moore or the context under which it was written. When asked, he told everyone to find it for themselves. Kevin Randle once again misses the point of this kind of evidence. A statement made fifty years later is not actual proof of anything but how Moore remembers what transpired. He has not established a fact that there were no NOTAMs issued for flight number 4 and all other flights had NOTAMs. Therefore, he can not substantiate the claim he has been making regarding this issue.

One can easily understand what Moore was talking about if one simply looks at the NYU records. He was, more than likely, making his statement based on his reading of these documents. As previously mentioned, the Fort Worth Subcommittee on air space had originally stated that no further authorization was required to launch their balloons since it was thought they were stay inside the White Sands area. This implies that the NYU team probably did not have to follow any guidelines for issuing NOTAMs. It was only after the NYU team informed the CAA that their balloons were drifting out of the White Sands area did the CAA become concerned and directed the NYU team to inform airmen of their balloon operations:

*That release of free balloons by the New York University within the confines of the White Sands Proving area be approved provided that: (a) Local coordination be effected to the satisfaction of the Department of Commerce Member and the Commanding Officer at Biggs Field to assure all precautions are taken to prevent collision of aircraft with this airborne equipment.*¹⁹

This statement suggests that the NYU team was probably not filing NOTAMs for any of their flights prior to this and not just flight number 4 (or whatever you want to call the "cluster of balloons" flight) in the summer of 1947.

If the NYU group was filing NOTAMs, they would have used the set of guidelines when they were operating on the east coast. The New York Subcommittee informed the NYU team that they had to file at least two NOTAMs when releasing balloons. They were required to file a NOTAM twelve hours prior to the flight and one after any balloons were launched. If the NYU unit was following these rules when they went to New Mexico, they would have issued a NOTAM on June 3rd prior to launching and one after launching the "cluster of balloons". It would not matter if it were a full flight or a scaled down service flight. Both would present a hazard to air traffic and both would require the NOTAM. We do not know for sure if this was case without the actual NOTAM records, which do not exist. If they did exist and the team followed these guidelines, it probably would not have resolved much since there probably

would have been a NOTAM filed for the planned launch and one filed for the launching of the “cluster of balloons”.

The NOTAM argument seems to fail at this point no matter which interpretation you make. I am sure Randle and his team can convince themselves that the believed (not substantiated) absence of a NOTAM proves there was no fight number four but implying that it is a proven fact is simply wishful thinking. Pontificating is not the same thing as establishing facts with incontrovertible proof.

Operational security

In another attempt to falsify the project MOGUL explanation, Kevin Randle dusts off another one of his old arguments:

I'm not even going to bother with the argument that Mogul wasn't all that secret... with pictures of it published in the newspapers on July 10, 1947, and the name being used in all sorts of non-classified publications which eliminates another of the legs for the Mogul explanation.²⁰

He essentially stated the same thing back in 2008:

The point that the skeptics and debunkers refuse to understand is that the balloon launches in New Mexico, the equipment used and science being conducted there was not classified. Get it. There was nothing classified about what was going on in New Mexico.²¹

Like so many of Randle's arguments, he appears to be telling only half the story. As a military officer, he would know that any classified operation has OPERATIONAL SECURITY (OPSEC). OPSEC is trying to prevent unclassified information from being used to piece together what the classified nature of a mission/program is. I experienced this several times when I was aboard Navy Submarines deploying for a classified mission. Deployment dates/underway times were considered classified as OPSEC and I remember being briefed about this. The best example I recall occurred when I reported aboard USS Providence. I had orders for another submarine but they were changed while I was on leave. I was called at my home and told I needed to report to USS Providence within a week. I was unable to obtain any more information than this even when I contacted the submarine. I spent a few hectic days trying to rearrange my travel plans in order to get to Connecticut in time. It was not until I reported aboard, did I know when and where the ship was deploying.

In the case of Project MOGUL, Randle is correct that there was absolutely nothing classified about the materials in the flights themselves. The NYU team even described their efforts to develop constant altitude balloons in the August 1948 Journal of Meteorology. A close examination of that document reveals that there was no mention of the payload involved and the purpose of the flights. They could not do this because of the classification of that information. The purpose of MOGUL was to listen for the sounds of distant nuclear detonations in the Soviet Union by placing balloons at a constant altitude where the sounds could be heard a half world away. Mentioning that information would reveal that the United States knew that the Soviets were going to detonate a nuclear device and how they could detect them. Such an operation also would reveal that the United States went to such extremes because they did not know what was transpiring behind “the iron curtain”.

Several of the crashed spaceship proponents seem to try and associate the various stories told about security sweeps, military personnel guarding the highway, and death threats as part of the security tied to project MOGUL. I am unaware of skeptics suggesting that all of these stories were part of the security designed to protect MOGUL. None of these stories can be positively proven and the sources of these stories are all anecdotal. The 1947 media accounts mentioned no significant security actions of this kind. Most skeptics simply dismiss them as part of the evolving myth that is Roswell.

However, there were stories told by Marcel and Dubose that seem to indicate there was a concern for security. Marcel stated he was not to talk about it any more and Dubose stated they needed to “get the press off their backs”. All of this can possibly be traced back to OPSEC regarding MOGUL. The goal of the OPSEC was to deflect attention by the press from the NYU team operations. This may have been done as part of a master plan, independently by different groups, or simply by accident based on other reasons (For example, a publicity campaign designed to put a positive spin on a simple mistake):

1. A demonstration for the press was staged by personnel at Alamogordo Army Air Field, which showed them launching balloons with ML-307 reflectors. The NYU team's efforts were not mentioned and it was stated the flights were for training purposes. One could consider this OPSEC in action. They wanted to give a source for the flights. Otherwise, somebody in the press might have poked around and discovered that somebody else was launching these balloons and the purpose was not simply for training.
2. Jesse Marcel complained to interviewers that the press only saw a small portion of the debris. The photographs at Fort Worth reflect this statement. This may have been on purpose or by accident. Dubose stated they wanted to call it a weather balloon to get the press off the story. Had they presented a large quantity of debris (many balloons/reflectors, and other items), the press might have begun to ask more questions than Ramey desired and conclude it was not just a simple weather balloon. This

could be considered a possible source of OPSEC to prevent reporters from trying to locate the true source and purpose of the debris.

3. There even may have even been a bit of OPSEC with Mack Brazel. The one item that might be unique regarding the flight was the sonobuoy. We don't know if he recovered it or if it was ever found. However, had he located it and mentioned it, it might, once again, bring up some interest of the press. It is possible that Mack Brazel (and possibly Jesse Marcel) were told not to mention the sonobuoy as it might hint at the purpose of the flight. We don't have any evidence that this occurred but it seems plausible it might have happened and later be misinterpreted as something more sinister.

In the MOGUL hypothesis, the only concern about security would be that the media might discover the true origin and purpose of the flight. The efforts to preserve OPSEC may have been the source of these stories of concerns about security told many years later.

It was impossible to get there

The current "end-all" argument is that the balloons could NEVER have made it to the Foster ranch debris field. Back in the mid-1990s, Professor Charles Moore had presented a trajectory that indicated the flight could make it to the Foster Ranch. His work has been criticized heavily by the crashologists. In some cases, they have good reason to be critical. Some of the math is incorrect and the tables in the book for the flight do not make sense. When Dave Thomas talked to him, Professor Moore admitted that the data and his calculations were poorly presented. He also added that his trajectory was only a qualitative test and not a quantitative one. Moore was only trying to demonstrate how the balloons might have gotten to the Foster Ranch. It was not an effort to prove the balloon flight positively made it to the ranch.

Since then, many proponents have computed their own trajectories and have concluded that it was impossible/extremely unlikely for the balloons to reach the Foster Ranch for various reasons. Many of them involve the ascent rates of the balloons, the speeds/directions of the winds, and the duration of the flight. I am not going to spend pages discussing in detail these specific arguments but it is important to note that all these values are variables that can not be defined to the point that an absolute conclusion can be drawn:

- Winds can vary in speed with time and distance. They can also shift direction by several degrees or more.
- The ascent/descent rates of these balloon trains can also vary as demonstrated by flight #5's initial rapid ascent rate and rapid descent rate from the stratosphere. In the July 1947 progress report, the authors noted that altitude control squibs failed to work several times at high altitudes during these early June tests. These are probably the squibs used to release the lifter balloons. If these failed to work during the June 4th flight, then the balloons would have risen much faster than expected.
- The duration of the flight can be affected by how long the balloons were exposed to the sun.

Creating an accurate flight trajectory with so many variables would be difficult. There may even be other unknown variables. A potential wind shift or current may have been missed in the pilot balloon data (which was launched over 30 miles south of Alamogordo) used to compute the trajectory. The NYU team noted this when flight #11 did not perform as one might have expected:

Another striking feature of the flight is the disagreement between the actual flight path and the trajectory which might have been estimated from routine upper-wind reports. Reports from El Paso, Roswell, Albuquerque and White Sands were used for comparison with the observed trajectory. Except for White Sands, none of these stations reported any wind from the WSW at or near the floating level during the 12-hour period covered by the flight. At White Sands a very shallow current was detected moving in the direction indicated by the balloon flight. This clearly demonstrates the non-representativeness of the ordinary pilot balloon observations.²²

We can also examine how well modern computer programs can predict the flight path of a balloon. The Saskatoon amateur radio club flies high altitude balloons frequently. Their web site recaps each flight. Many of their flights have predicted tracks based on computer programs that have the latest data available. One would think it would be very accurate but it isn't. While the general ground tracks are reasonably close, some of the flights landed over 10 miles away from their predicted landing area. If one can not compute the precise flight path of a single balloon using local data and modern computer technology, what chance is there that one can compute a conclusive trajectory of a flight using dozens of balloons and limited information? The best one might hope to do is predict a very general landing area that would have a large margin for error!

Based on this information can one really conclusively state the balloons could not have made it to the Foster ranch? In order to falsify the MOGUL hypothesis, one needs to prove, without a shadow of a doubt, that the balloons could NEVER have made it to the Foster Ranch. Since the general direction of the tropospheric winds that morning were towards the NE/ENE and the Foster Ranch was NNE of Alamogordo AFB, it seems to indicate that a trajectory of some kind is possible. Without more data/information it is hard to say

either way.

Connecting the dots

The important points that have been raised by the skeptics is that there are multiple reasons to suspect that this “cluster of balloons” may have made it to the Foster ranch site. All one has to do is examine how the recovered “disc” was described and recorded in 1947:

1. Mack Brazel (confirmed by his daughter Bessie in 1993) described finding large quantities of rubber and remains of, what appears to be, radar reflectors.
2. Jesse Marcel is quoted in 1947 news papers as finding debris that matches what we see in the photographs.
3. The photographs show balloon materials that had been left out in the sun for a long period of time (see SUNlite 4-4 and 4-5) as well as the types of radar reflectors known to be used by the NYU team.
4. The news wires, which are the very first news reports regarding the story, mentioned that the disc was made of tin foil and was only a few feet across.
5. The FBI teletype stated that the “disc” was supported by a very large balloon of twenty feet (this estimate may have been based on the amount of rubber found and not finding a single piece of rubber this size).

While the crashed space ship proponents consider all of these items part of the grand conspiracy to hide the truth, an equally compelling argument is that these were descriptions and photographs of the actual debris that was recovered. This argument does not have to assume a vast conspiracy for which there is no evidence. There is also no evidence, other than stories told decades later, that it is not the debris that was recovered.

The NYU team was the only group flying balloon clusters in New Mexico during this time period and it makes them the likely source. The only flights not recovered from these May/June operations were the “cluster of balloons” launched on June 4th and a test balloon flight on the 29th of May. We are not positive what each flight contained but the recovery of debris similar to the type used by the NYU on these flights implies that one of these balloon clusters may have made it to the ranch on some form of trajectory.

A different perspective



From Qualia Soup's "Open Mindedness" video available at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T69TOuqaqXI>

It is no surprise that Kevin Randle can convince himself, and others that do not need convincing, that these arguments seal the fate of the project MOGUL explanation. However, when viewing his “facts” from “a different perspective”, we discover that they don’t appear so compelling. In some cases, there is evidence that indicates that they are not facts but biased interpretation of documentation or opinion. Dismissing other possibilities without good evidence is the same close-minded approach that skeptics are accused of taking when accepting the MOGUL explanation and rejecting the crashed spaceship scenario.

The whole idea of the MOGUL theory offered by the USAF/Todd/Pflock/Moore is that it is the most likely source for the debris described and photographed in 1947. The NYU team used the same types of materials in their balloon flights prior to July of 1947. It does not mean MOGUL is the only possible source of the debris but, based on what we know, it is the most probable

source. If some evidence were unearthed that either produces a more reasonable solution or conclusively falsifies the MOGUL hypothesis, skeptics would be more than willing to accept it. However, that evidence has to be verifiable and not based on speculation, biased interpretation, opinions, or guesswork. As Lance Moody pointed out, there is a difference between supposition and fact.

The ball remains in the dream team’s court to provide more conclusive evidence to falsify the project MOGUL scenario or support the crashed spaceship solution. Until that occurs, the best working hypothesis for the debris recovered at the Foster ranch remains to be project MOGUL.

Notes and references

1. Randle, Kevin. Conspiracy of Silence. New York: Avon Books, 1997. P. 228

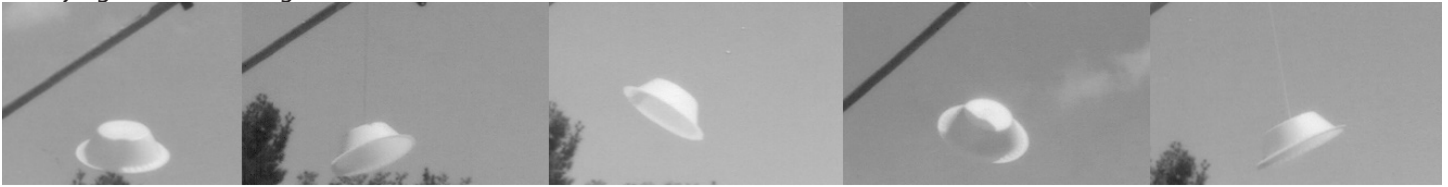
2. Randle, Kevin. "Mogul and Roswell". A different perspective. July 11, 2013. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2013/07/mogul-and-roswell.html>
3. Printy, Tim. Popular Roswell Myths. Available WWW: <http://home.comcast.net/~tprinty/UFO/Rosmyths.htm>
4. Randle, Kevin. "Vetting the UFO field". A different perspective. June 18, 2013. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2013/06/vetting-ufo-field.html>
5. HQ USAF, The Roswell Report: Fact vs. Fiction in the New Mexico Desert. Washington D.C.: US Government, 1995 Attachment 32, Appendix 18 - New York University Progress Report No. 7.
6. HQ USAF, The Roswell Report: Fact vs. Fiction in the New Mexico Desert. Washington D.C.: US Government, 1995 Attachment 32, Appendix 17 - Personal Journal of Albert P. Crary.
7. ibid. Attachment 32, Appendix 13 - New York University Technical Report No. 1 Table VII.
8. Randle, Kevin. "Mogul and Roswell". A different perspective. July 11, 2013. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2013/07/mogul-and-roswell.html>
9. "History for Alamogordo, NM: June 4, 1947". Weather Underground. Available WWW: http://www.wunderground.com/history/airport/KHMN/1947/6/4/DailyHistory.html?req_city=NA&req_state=NA&req_statename=NA
10. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). National Climatic Data Center data access. Available WWW: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/data-access>
11. HQ USAF, The Roswell Report: Fact vs. Fiction in the New Mexico Desert. Washington D.C.: US Government, 1995 Attachment 32, Appendix 13 - New York University Technical Report No. 1. P. 43.
12. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). National Climatic Data Center data access. Available WWW: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/data-access>
13. HQ USAF, The Roswell Report: Fact vs. Fiction in the New Mexico Desert. Washington D.C.: US Government, 1995 Attachment 27.
14. Randle, Kevin. "Mogul and Roswell". A different perspective. July 11, 2013. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2013/07/mogul-and-roswell.html>
15. Randle, Kevin. "Comments - Citizen hearing and alien bodies". A different perspective. May 14, 2013. Available WWW: <http://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=11558306&postID=798368977937054016>
16. -. "The Roswell investigation and the Skeptics". A different perspective. May 6, 2012. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2012/05/roswell-investigation-and-skeptics.html>
17. Mugan, Anthony. "Comments - Mogul and Roswell". A different perspective. July 11, 2013. Available WWW: <http://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=11558306&postID=5156563088322044630>
18. Randle, Kevin. "Comments - Mogul and Roswell". A different perspective. July 11, 2013. Available WWW: <http://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=11558306&postID=5156563088322044630>
19. HQ USAF, The Roswell Report: Fact vs. Fiction in the New Mexico Desert. Washington D.C.: US Government, 1995 Attachment 32, Appendix 13 - New York University Technical Report No. 1. P. 43.
20. Randle, Kevin. "Mogul and Roswell". A different perspective. July 11, 2013. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2013/07/mogul-and-roswell.html>
21. Randle, Kevin. "How secret was Mogul". A different perspective. July 7, 2008. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2008/07/how-secret-was-mogul.html>
22. HQ USAF, The Roswell Report: Fact vs. Fiction in the New Mexico Desert. Washington D.C.: US Government, 1995. Attachment 32, Appendix 13 - Summary of flights July 15, 1949. P. 13.

STRING THEORY PART III

This is the final part of my tests involving strings and models. Last issue I tried to complete the tests using black and white TMax400 film (35mm format) but the 35mm camera had malfunctioned. I managed to perform most of the tests recently using the same film and lens (50mm) from a distance of about 16 feet. I ran out of film before I performed the tests on the fishing line and Invisible thread but these threads were difficult to detect using a digital SLR. I seriously doubt that the film camera would be able to resolve them based on the results I obtained with this latest round of tests.

Results

The results were similar to the results I obtained with the Holga in the last article. The black and the white threads were easily visible. The bead wire was visible with some enhancement in Photoshop. However, the grey thread and the kite string were not visible in any of the images I had. I am sure microscopic examination of the negative or some special software might reveal the threads but, at first glance, some of these strings appear to be good enough to fool many people into think the negatives show a real flying saucer hovering in the air.



Bead wire

Black thread

Grey thread

Kite string

White thread

Conclusions

What I have learned from all of my tests is that the background and lighting conditions can affect on how easily a thread will be detected. While some threads (black and white) can readily be detected under most lighting conditions, others are more difficult. I found the fact that the grey thread and kite string were difficult to detect in film cameras interesting to say the least. It implies that, under the right conditions, one can produce a fake UFO photograph using some simple thread as long as it is the right color and dimension that allows it to escape detection. Iconic UFO images like the Trent and Heflin photographs could have been produced this way. They may have been hoaxes that eventually got out of hand. Once they became big news, it would be hard for the photographers to back out and reveal that they were just goofing around with their cameras to see if they could trick people.

701 club

CASE # 2045: September 6, 1952¹

PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD			
1. DATE 6 Sep 52	2. LOCATION Lake Charles, AFB, La.		12. CONCLUSIONS ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☐ Other ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☒ Unknown
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local 0130 GMT	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☒ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar		
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	6. SOURCE 3 airmen		
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 2 hours.	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS 1	9. COURSE	
10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING White color. Round shaped. Circular motion.		11. COMMENTS	

Don Berliner's list summarizes the case as follows:

Sept. 6, 1952; Lake Charles AFB, Louisiana. 1:30 a.m. Witnesses: T/Sgt. J.E. Wilson and two enlisted men. One bright star-like light moved about the sky for 2 hours.²

Anytime I see a star-like object being in the sky for more than a few minutes, I begin to suspect there might be an astronomical explanation. Was this the case here?

Blue book investigation

Blue book did investigate to some extent but it seems that the individual performing the investigation did not put all the information together to solve the puzzle. Dr. Hynek, who probably would have solved this one, appears to have never seen this file or did not comment.

An interview with the witnesses was performed on 9 September but the interviews are not part of the file. The summary is missing a lot of key information that should have been obtained. That being angles of elevation and azimuth. Fortunately, there is also a flying object report message that provides additional details regarding the sighting. Based on these two documents, we can piece together most of the event.

Around 0130, one of the witnesses saw a UFO to the northeast. It was described as "glowing white" and "blinking".³ While the speed was described as being approximately 1000 mph, the object did not really seem to stray very far from one position in the sky. Instead, these speeds seem to have been used to describe the random motion of the UFO as it performed maneuvers that were described as, "circular motion in one area then suddenly change to another area and repeat the motion. It would seem to change altitude at no particular time, but at anytime"⁴ The air intelligence report described it as moving "around in a circle from a definite area. It appeared to rise and drop, it set (sic) still for an unknown length of time and then move very fast to the left or right not always in a straight line".⁵ Two other airmen also saw the UFO that night. The primary witness watched this for an hour. After that, the witness seemed to have lost interest. He went to bed with the UFO still up there darting around.

An important point that was not mentioned in Berliner's or Spark's description of the incident was that the same witness saw the same UFO (or one like it) the next night in the same area of the sky at 0230!⁶

AT ANYTIME PD MANNER OF DISAPPEARANCE CLN NEVER DID DISAPPEAR CMA WITNESS
JUST STOPPED WATCHING BY GOING TO SLEEP PD SAME OBJ APPEARED THE NEXT
NIGHT IN SAME POSITION CMA SAME TIME CMA BUT MOVED FASTER AND MORE OFTEN



Solution

The source of this UFO is not hard to determine. There were two excellent candidates in the sky that night (see Stellarium image above). The first was the star Capella. At 0130 on the 6th, it was an azimuth of 52 degrees and an angle of elevation of 32 degrees. By 0230, it had moved to 53 degrees azimuth and 42 degrees elevation. The other candidate was Jupiter. It was more towards the east at azimuth 98 degrees and an elevation of 47 degrees at 0130. By 0230, it had moved to 110 degrees azimuth and 60 degrees altitude. Both are very bright astronomical objects. In my opinion, Capella is the better match. It was in the northeast sky and, unlike Jupiter, would be more likely to scintillate wildly. The moving back and forth is best attributed to autokinesis effects as the witness stared at a point of light against a dark sky.

Why didn't Blue Book solve this one?

It was 1952 and Blue Book was swamped with UFO reports. They did not have the time or the resources to investigate all these cases properly. There were thirty-four cases that occurred between 1 and 8 September. There were an additional forty-one cases between 9 and 16 September. This does not even include about 250 cases from August. To declare this case "unidentified", even though it had a very likely astronomical solution, indicated that the AF simply spent very little time pursuing a solution.

Conclusion

There is no good reason to reject the astronomical explanation here. All of the characteristics of a classic misperception of a bright star/planet are there. The clincher has to be the witness seeing the same object around the same time in the same part of the sky on the following night. This one can be classified as "Probably Capella" and removed from the list of 701 unknowns.

Notes and references

1. "Project 10073 record card". Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/6382999/>
2. Berliner, Don. "The Bluebook unknowns". NICAP. Available WWW: <http://www.nicap.org/bluebook/unknowns.htm>
3. "Flyobrpt from COADIV Lake Charles AFB to DIR INTEL HQ USAF/ATIC WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OHIO/CGENT AFB COLO/CGSAC OFFUT AFB NEBR". DTG 102154Z. page 1. Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/6383006/>
4. *ibid*.
5. "Air intelligence information report IR-144-52". Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/6383009/>
6. "Flyobrpt from COADIV Lake Charles AFB to DIR INTEL HQ USAF/ATIC WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OHIO/CGENT AFB COLO/CGSAC OFFUT AFB NEBR". DTG 102154Z. page 2. Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/6383004/>

September 21, 1961

The UFO evidence summarizes the case as:

September 21, 1961--Pacific Ocean, nr. Wake Island. Airline pilots, ship, reported a bright white circular UFO. [X]¹

Section X has a much longer description of the event:

For about 10 minutes at 7:00 a.m. (Honolulu time), September 21, 1961, two airliners and a U.S. ship at sea observed a UFO simultaneously. The object passed overhead, apparently at extremely high altitude, angling southeasterly above the North Pacific. (See map.)

Reports from the Federal Aviation Agency, and the U.S. Navy Oceanographic Office publication "Notice to Mariners," establish the following facts.

At 1700 Greenwich Mean Time, the S.S. Iberville, north and east of Midway Island, noticed a white object about 20 degrees above the NW horizon. Its apparent angular size was about 1 degree (twice the apparent size of the full moon). For about 10 minutes, the UFO was observed passing over the ship headed southeast. As it neared the ship's meridian, it resembled a huge halo with a bright object in the center. The apparent size increased to over four times the size of the full moon. [See Notice to Mariners report, reproduced below.]

At the same time, a British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) airliner about 800 miles northeast of the ship saw the object overtake the plane. From a steep angle above the plane, the UFO continued southeasterly and disappeared over the horizon. Capt. H. F. Griffin described the UFO as "like a large smoke ring about 2 degrees in diameter [about 4 times the size of the full moon]." He said the center of the ring was clear sky, and once a star was visible through it. A ray of light seemed to project downward from the object.

A Pan American Airways plane, about 400 miles southeast of Capt. Griffin's position, confirmed the report. The pilot reported a doughnut-shaped object moving easterly about 10 degrees above the horizon.²

The description includes a map which shows the position of the ship and aircraft to be north and east of Midway island. There is also a reproduction of the Notice to Mariners report made by the second officer of the SS Iberville. It reads:

At 1700 G.M.T. on September 21, 1961, while in lat. 31° 30' N., long. 175° 30' E., a few minutes before morning twilight, a white opaque mass about twice the size of a full moon appeared in the northwest at an elevation of about 20°. It continued to climb toward the zenith and at about an elevation of 40°, the mass opened gradually to appear as a huge halo with a satellite in the center having very nearly the brightness of a first magnitude star. By the time it reached the zenith, it had more than doubled in size reaching its maximum at the zenith and then diminishing as it proceeded to the southeast. As it diminished it continued to decrease in size but did not appear to shrink into a corona as it had appeared but rather faded out completely at an elevation of approximately 20°. The entire mass was in view for approximately 8 to 10 minutes.³

NICAP would add the following comment about the case in their UFO evidence document:

The Soviet Union announced a few days later that they had successfully test fired a multi-stage carrier rocket over the Pacific (exact date not on record). However, the reported size of the UFO was far too large to be explained as a rocket payload.⁴

They would also write in their UFO Investigator, the following:

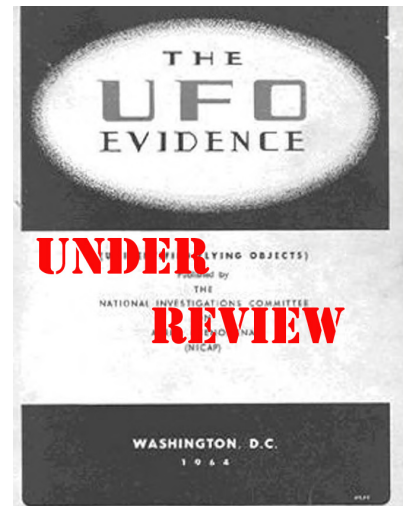
Based on first reports, these points seem evident:

- 1. The object was not an ICBM missile. Nor was it a satellite re-entering the atmosphere. These appear only as small balls of fire, briefly visible.*
- 2. The reflected light was from the sun, which was an hour below the horizon. The UFO had to be very high to catch its rays.*
- 3. At such a high altitude, the unknown device had to be extremely large (at least several hundred feet in diameter) for its edges and the hole to be so clearly seen by the BOAC crew. The size and description rule out all earth-made rockets, satellites, or Echo-type balloons.*

The "doughnut" shape the jet crews reported is similar to the future space-base proposed by rocket expert Wernher von Braun--a huge doughnut-shaped ring containing compartments for crews and equipment and rotating to create gravity. At a distance, the connecting framework would be invisible, and from far below, the space-base would appear just as Capt. Griffin described the UFO.

More advanced space engineers, experimenting on another planet, could have evolved the same type of space-base. It is possible that what the jet crews saw was such a spacecraft from another world.⁵ (UFO Investigator October 1961 p. 1-2)

This is how NICAP presented its case. There seems to be a wealth of information and the object was seen over a wide area of ocean. This indicates the object was extremely high in the sky. My next stop would be the Blue Book files to check for any additional information.



Blue Book's information and conclusion

The Blue Book file is limited and has two teletypes covering the sightings by the airplane crews. The Iberville is not listed in the case file. Some important highlights from these documents were:

UNCLAS/CIRVIS/BOAC SPEED BIRD 582 PILOTED BY CAPT. GRIFFIN TOKYO
TO HONOLULU. 21/2000Z POSITION 3800N 16100W SPEED
550, TEMPERATURE -53 DEGREES CENTIGRADE ALTITUDE 37

1. The position of the BOAC plane was 38.0 North and 161.0 West at 2000Z, which was three hours later.⁶ Apparently, this is when they filed the report. This position was used by Blue Book and NICAP. No position was given for 1700Z. However, if we work backward based on the reported heading of 83 degrees magnetic and air speed of 550 knots, we discover the position of the plane was approximately 36.25 deg North 164.5 deg East. This is in agreement with the description by the pilot of the sky, which he described as pre-dawn. 1700Z is thirty minutes after sun rise for the 161 degree west position. From the 164.5 degree position, the sun rose about 1850Z.
2. The BOAC air crew reported the object was about 50 degrees elevation when first sighted and was headed towards an azimuth of about 100 degrees.⁷
3. The Pan Am plane was located at 34 deg 55 min North and 154 deg 40 min East.⁸
4. The Pan Am crew reported the object appeared about 10 degrees over the eastern horizon and was headed eastward.⁹

Blue Book wrote a brief conclusion regarding these sightings¹⁰:

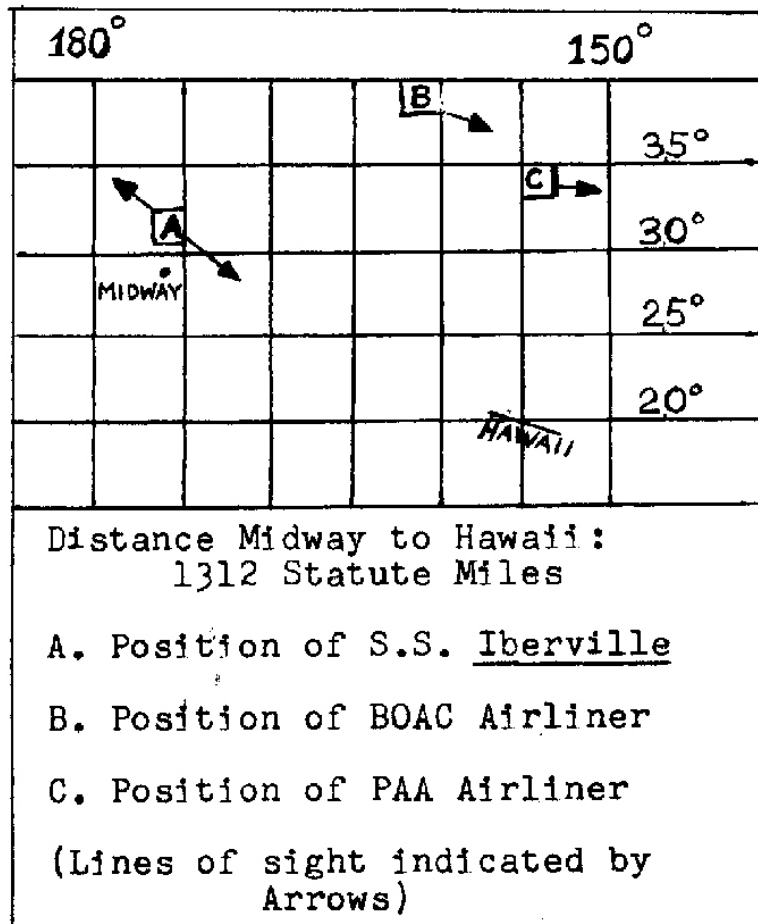
Other (MISSILE ACTIVITY). Missile exercise in area at the time of the sighting.

PROJECT 10073 RECORD	
1. DATE - TIME GROUP 21 September 1961 21/1700Z	2. LOCATION 38.00N 161.00W 34.55N 154.40E (PACIFIC)
3. SOURCE Military	10. CONCLUSION Other (MISSILE ACTIVITY)
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One	Missile exercise in area at time of sighting.
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 6 Minutes	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS Object appearing as large circular area of high intensity light. With dark outer rim traveling at orbital speed leaving faint glow or trail. Doughnut appearance. Observed to E and looked like light as it got closer it was brilliant with the center missing. 2nd report of object appearing like smoke ring 2 deg in diameter. Not like Aurora. Ring darker than rim around ring. Object moving ESE.
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Ground, Air-Visual	
7. COURSE ESE	
8. PHOTOS ☒ Yes ☒ No	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes ☒ No	

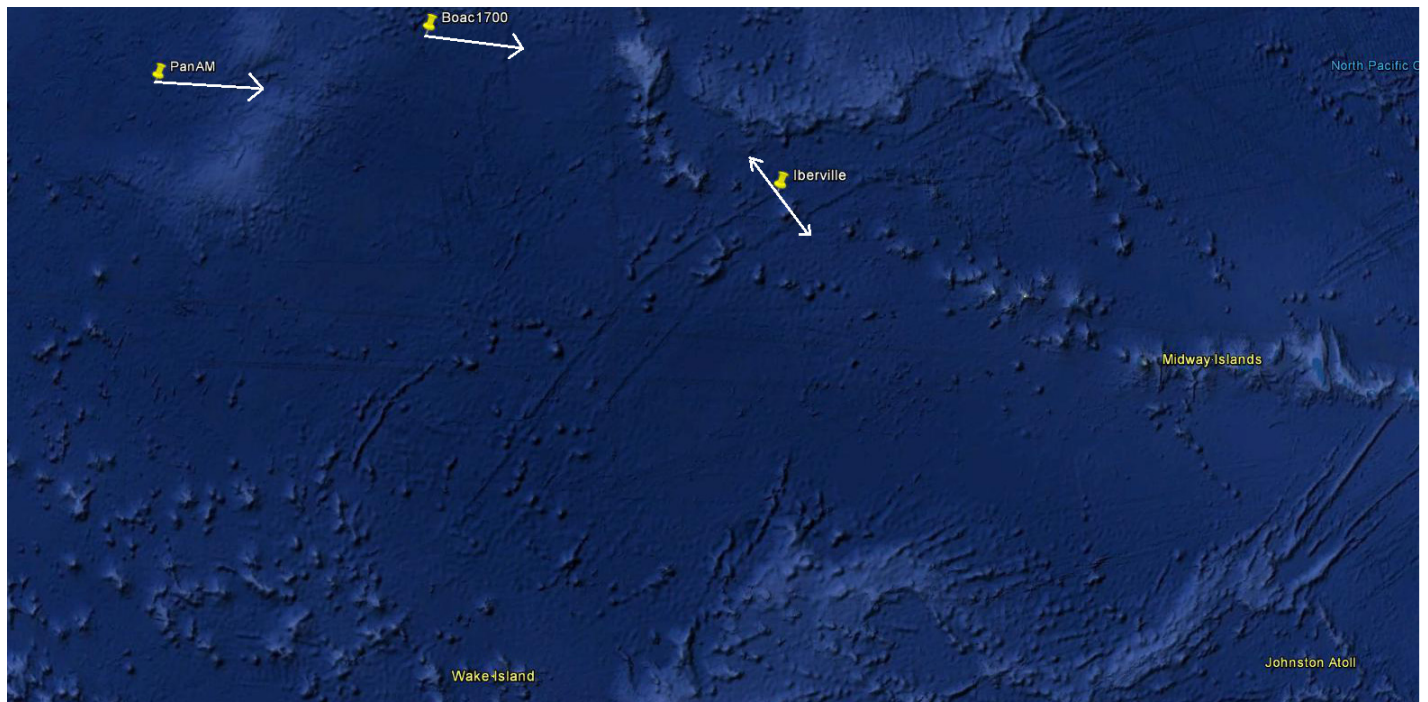
There wasn't much in regards to who fired the missile and its destination. Before we examine this possibility, we need to fix some mistakes in the UFO evidence document so we can properly evaluate the sighting.

Getting the positions correct

NICAP's authors present the following map regarding the sightings¹¹:



NICAP really did not research this very well because they confused the longitudes of the aircraft and ship. The Pan Am aircraft and Iberville were at EAST longitude and not west longitude. Additionally, the position of the BOAC aircraft was three hours old! As a result the map above is completely inaccurate. This is how the actual positions and sighting lines appear using Google Earth:



Potential source

In 1961, the Russian's were ahead in the space race. By September 1961, they had launched a probe to Venus, put the first man in orbit, and Titov had orbited the earth for a full day. Meanwhile, the Russians were testing a variety of ICBM rockets for deployment. Normally, the Soviet Union would launch their payloads to the Kura peninsula. However, in September of 1961, they launched sev-

eral ICBM payloads towards the Pacific ocean to test the maximum range of their rockets. Unfortunately, the Soviet Union records of these tests is not that extensive. The astronautix web site chronology gives no time for this entry:

1961 September 21 - . Launch Site: Baikonur. Launch Complex: Baikonur LC31. Launch Pad: LC31?. LV Family: R-7. Launch Vehicle: R-7A. LV Configuration: R-7A E15003-03.

R-7A II-7 test - . Nation: USSR. Agency: RVSN. Apogee: 1,350 km (830 mi). Summary: R-7A readiness verification test..¹²

The date of 21 September is interesting. Baikonur is 6 hours ahead of UTC, which means a launch before 1700 GMT/UTC (the time of the sightings) would have been prior to 2300 Baikonur time on the 21st. So the date is correct. However, was it launched towards the Pacific and what part of the Pacific was targeted?

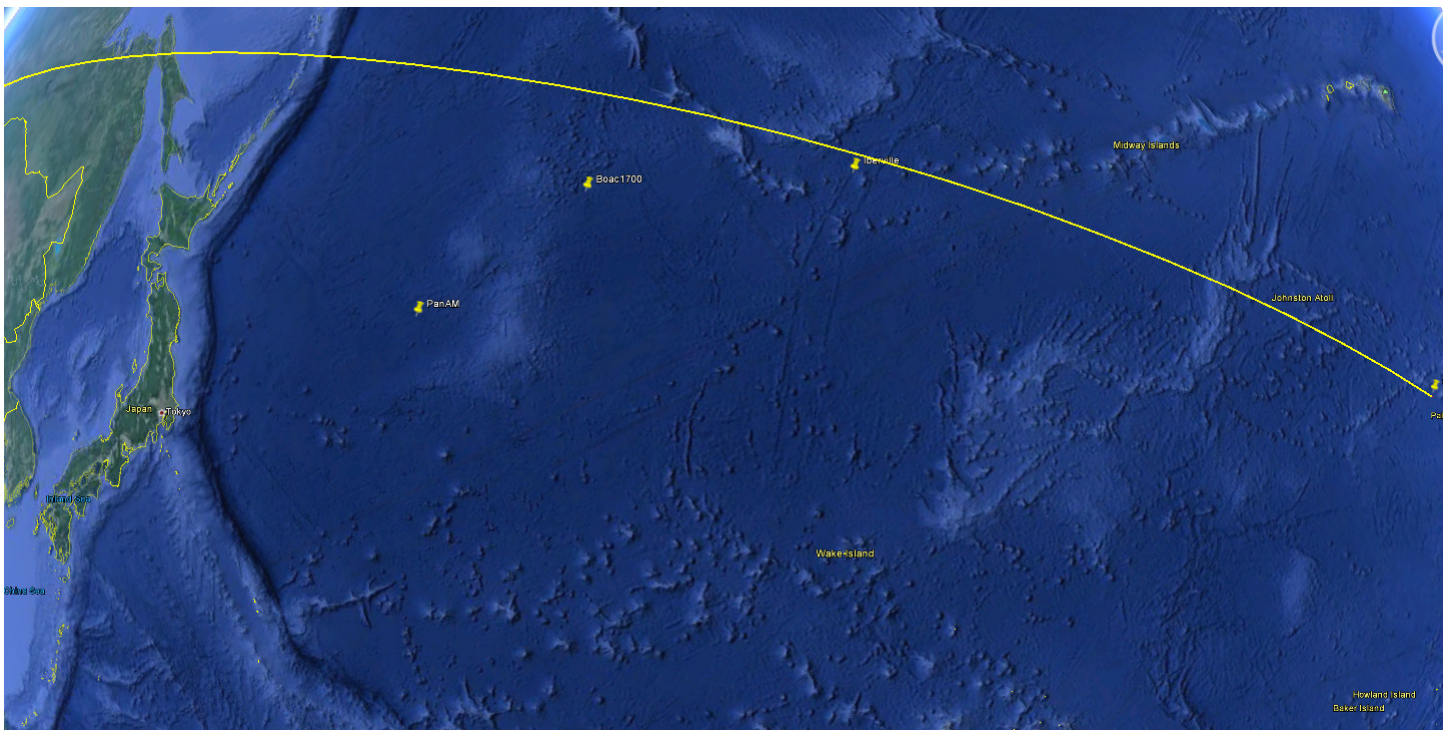
My search took me to the Newspaper archive, where I found several articles based on an announcement made by TASS about this rocket launch. While they did not state where the payload landed, the UPI drew the following conclusion:

Tass did not give an exact distance for the shot. But previous announcements said that in the two earlier tests the rockets traveled some 7,500 miles into a designated Pacific target area some 1,000 miles southwest of Hawaii. Today's announcement said the multi-stage carrier rocket was fired on Thursday (the 21st).¹³

I was somewhat surprised that the Soviet Union was able to launch an ICBM so near the United States. Wouldn't such a test appear as an attack? The article answered this by stating that the Soviet Union had warned aircraft and mariners ahead of time about the test. I am sure that the United States was also informed.

I e-mailed Jonathan McDowell, among others, and he agreed that the launch was probably to the southwest of Hawaii. He stated that on page 201 of the book *'Nezabivayemiy Baykonur'*, the ICBM had been launched at "maximum range".¹⁴ The location of about 1000 miles to the southwest of Hawaii does put the distance traveled around 7500 miles as stated in the news reports.

Using Google earth, I traced the most direct route from Baikonur to this position. It is interesting to note that the trajectory takes it almost directly over the SS Iberville. The directions of observation by the BOAC and Pan Am crews were in the directions of the flight path of the ICBM.



Is it solved?

Unfortunately, we can't solve this one conclusively because we don't have a launch time. Maybe somebody can find it but I have had little luck in doing so even though I have contacted several experts on the subject. There are many characteristics in the reports that are what one would expect from this kind of missile test. The R-7A was a liquid fueled rocket and there probably would have been fuel remaining in the booster. As this vented off into space, it would have produced a cloud around the booster which would have been several degrees across and not simply a mere pinpoint of light as suggested in the NICAP documents. The description of the UFO is what one would expect from a booster rocket venting fuel in space. If one couples the direction of travel and directions of observation in the report, it paints a pretty convincing picture that the ICBM test caused this report.

I found NICAP's knowledge about rocket launches and ICBM tests limited and very biased. One can forgive NICAP in 1961 for making such comments. The space age was only a few years old and their experience with such sightings was extremely limited even

though there was at least one NICAP member who was a missile expert (Retired Rear Admiral Delmer S. Fahrney). However, the promotion of the case a few years later in this document indicated they had yet to learn anything about such tests and how they appeared. NICAP seemed to have been more interested in promoting such cases as “unidentified” than actually pursuing potential explanations. Even more astounding is that many of these cases continue to be presented as “best evidence” on various UFO web sites across the internet. The lessons of the past appear to be ignored.

Unless somebody can produce a launch time that falsifies this potential explanation, I would consider it likely that the Soviet ICBM test produced these sightings. This case is NOT the “best evidence” that UFOs are alien spaceships and should be removed from the list.

Notes and references

1. Hall, Richard M. (Ed.) The UFO evidence. The National Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). New York: Barnes and Noble. 1997. P. 139
2. *ibid.* P. 125-6.
3. *ibid.* P. 126.
4. *ibid.* P. 126.
5. “Two jet airliners encounter UFO flying disc”. The UFO investigator. NICAP. October 1961 P. 2-3.
6. “CIRVIS report BOAC Speed bird 582”. DTG 220215Z. page 1. Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/8679040/>
7. *ibid.* page 1-2.
8. “CIRVIS report PA 878”. DTG 211856Z. page 2. Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/8679159/>
9. *ibid.*
10. “Project 10073 record card”. Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/8679006/>
11. Hall, Richard M. (Ed.) The UFO evidence. The National Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). New York: Barnes and Noble. 1997. P. 126.
12. “1961 Chronology”. Astronautix web site. Available WWW: <http://www.astronautix.com/chrono/1961.htm>
13. “Russian rocket test is successful”. The Coshocton Tribune Coshocton, Ohio. September 24, 1961. Page 18.
14. McDowell, Johnathan. E-mail to the author. 13 July 2013.

Virgie, Kentucky UFO identified?



It appears that the UFO seen over Kentucky, Tennessee, Carolina, Virginia, and Pennsylvania last October were the result of a high altitude balloon launched by Google. Their project Loon was designed to fly at 60,000 feet. According to Google, the balloon was aloft for eleven days and came down in the area of Canada.

In SUNlite 4-6 (page 26), I discussed this event and figured it was some sort of odd high altitude balloon operating around 65,000 feet. I followed this up in SUNlite 5-1, where I plotted its trajectory towards New York. Clouds interfered with observers in this area and I found no other reports after that. This is consistent with the statement that the balloon came down in Canada.

At that time I wrote the article for SUNlite 5-1, the only source one could present was a wayward Korean protest balloon of some kind. I was somewhat skeptical of this being the source since it would have to survive the trip to altitude without bursting. However, I did think it might be possible. Now it appears a more likely source has been presented. It may have been a project Loon balloon as Google claims

but I have to wonder why it took so long for them to admit it was theirs. I also am curious as to why MUFON wasn't able to figure this one out. Did they identify this event as “case closed”?

Jesse Marcel Jr. passes

As I was putting the finishing touches on this issue, I learned that Jesse Marcel Jr. had passed away. While I do not agree with how he has remembered the events of what transpired that night, I still had respect for the individual and his personal accomplishments. I am sure he will be fondly remembered in UFO circles.

UFOs on the tube

The world's strangest UFO stories - The great alien conspiracy

There haven't been many fresh new UFO programs on television these days. They keep rerunning the same old shows. This is from 2006 but it was interesting to see some of the comments made by various individuals.

Richard Dolan and Jim Marrs both declared or implied that the explosion of the atomic bomb in 1945 was the reason the aliens had come to visit. Marrs went as far to say that the bomb sent off some form of shock waves throughout the solar system. I find that hard to believe since the original bombs only had an explosive equivalent of about 20 kilotons of TNT. Compare that to the explosive equivalent of Tunguska (3-30 Megatons) and Krakatoa (200 megatons). Neither of these explosions caused aliens to come visit the planet. The radiation released by an atomic explosion is not that significant at a distance so that does not work either. This theory has been tossed about but, unless the aliens were close by already, it really does not hold much water.

Peter Gerstein briefly mentioned the "Phoenix lights" and indicated that the 10 PM videos were something really strange. It is hard to believe that ten years after the event he was unaware that these 10 PM videos were nothing more than flares dropped over the Barry Goldwater range.

Nick Pope also made an appearance but he made two statements that appear to disagree with his current position about UFOs. He stated there was no evidence that UFOs were alien spaceships and that there is no truth to a conspiracy covering up UFOs. Has he changed his mind recently or does it depend on to whom he is talking?

Clifford Stone's appearance was comical to say the least. His story about an alien spaceship crash, where he was directed by some super secret agent to take radiation readings, was not very compelling. This supposedly occurred in 1969 and he was told that any bodies he saw were just monkeys. Stone's tales are highly dubious.

The reason for the conspiracy was mentioned by Jim Marrs. He declared that the alien technology would destroy the automotive, oil, and gas industries. The program went on to question this claim briefly by stating that these groups would be more than willing to take such technology and sell it instead of hiding it. The answer depends on how much you want to believe in a conspiracy.

Those in charge of the conspiracy are considered to be the "Illuminati". David Icke suggests that these "Illuminati" are actually alien-human hybrids. The aliens are not the grays but reptilian in nature. Apparently, if you watch these hybrids close enough, they will let their guard down for a few second and allow their reptilian nature to be seen. I guess that does not work with videos, which should reveal these hybrids if one records them enough. Once again, we have another claim without evidence when there should be some.

In the closing section Derrel Sims made an appearance where he showed everybody his little alien implants. Apparently, these implants in the foot can control the brain of the individual by adjusting the chemistry in the body. How it does this is completely unknown even though he has the implants! He would not allow any testing of these artifacts by the producers of show. The little slivers could easily have been bits of debris one picked up walking along the side of the road. They mean nothing without proof they are doing exactly what Sims states they are doing.

The show concluded with a discussion about the possibility that the aliens computers are controlling the Earth's environment like in "The Matrix". Such speculation appears to be based more on the science fiction than any facts to present. The program was reasonably presented and it tried to be skeptical. It was worth watching once.

Buy it, borrow it, or bin it?

Inside the real area 51 - Thomas J. Carey and Donald R. Schmitt

When I heard this book was out, I was reluctant to spend my money on it. However, because it stated it included "startling new eyewitness accounts", I felt it might be worth it. I was disappointed.

Like most of the Carey and Schmitt writings, there is more hype than substance. What the book includes are mostly second hand stories of people who saw somebody with a piece of debris or knew somebody who saw the debris or aliens/ alien bodies.

Some of the stories were told in *Witness to Roswell* and others have been rehashed over the internet more times than I can consider. The chapter recounting Nitinol is a typical example of leaving out key details. *SUNlite* has pretty much demonstrated that the claims of Bragalia are less than compelling. The book states that the US military was not interested in alloying Titanium until after the Roswell incident. However, the 1948 Titanium symposium paperwork clearly states that the USAF and US Army were working on alloying Titanium before the Roswell incident! For some reason, that part is not mentioned.

Another case mentioned was the Magruder story, which states the Air War College class of 1947-1948 saw a Roswell alien. The already changed the date from July 1947 to April 1948. However, they do not address the research by Aurimas Svitojus, which demonstrated that Magruder's record states that on July 20, 1947, he detached from his command to proceed to the Air Command and Staff school at Maxwell AFB and not the air war college. Dr. James Mowbray states in his history of the college that no Marines entered the air war college until 1949. Carey and Schmitt do not attempt to resolve these inconsistencies.

One can suspect that many of the stories in this book rely on more of the same inadequate investigation. Like *Witness to Roswell*, this book does not do anything but tell a one-sided version of events. This one belongs in the recycle bin.